WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An electrosurgical instrument comprising:

a shaft;

a flexible portion; and

a head coupled to the shaft through the flexible portion and pivotably coupled to the flexible portion, the head including an electrically conductive surface,

wherein the flexible portion is configured to bias the electrically conductive surface towards a tissue surface.

2. The electrosurgical instrument of claim 1, wherein the flexible portion comprises a nitinol wire.

3. The electrosurgical instrument of claim 1, wherein the flexible portion comprises a nitinol tube.

4. The electrosurgical instrument of claim 1, wherein the flexible portion comprises a spring.

5. The electrosurgical instrument of claim 1, wherein the flexible portion comprises a distal portion of the shaft.

6. The electrosurgical instrument of claim 5, wherein the distal portion is corrugated.

7. The electrosurgical instrument of claim 5, wherein the distal portion has a radial cross section similar to a radial cross section of a remainder of the shaft.

8. The electrosurgical instrument of claim 1, wherein the flexible portion is configured to flex in at least a direction and the head is configured to pivot about an axis substantially perpendicular to the direction.

9. The electrosurgical instrument of claim 1, wherein the head is configured to pivot in three dimensions about the flexible portion.

10. The electrosurgical instrument of claim 9, wherein the head and the flexible member are coupled by a ball-and-socket joint.

11. The electrosurgical instrument of claim 1, wherein the head includes a slot about which the head is configured to pivot.

12. The electrosurgical instrument of claim 11, wherein the slot is a transverse slot pivotably receiving the flexible portion.

13. The electrosurgical instrument of claim 11, wherein the slot is a transverse slot pivotably receiving a wire coupled to the flexible portion.

14. The electrosurgical instrument of claim 13, wherein the wire is rigid.

15. The electrosurgical instrument of claim 1, further comprising a living hinge disposed between the head and the flexible portion.

16. The electrosurgical instrument of claim 15, wherein the living hinge is adjacent to and connects the head and the flexible portion, and the living hinge comprises a section that is thinner than portions of the head and the flexible portion that are adjacent to the living hinge.

17. The electrosurgical instrument of claim 1, wherein the head further comprises a non-conductive surface arranged relative to the electrically conductive surface to limit penetration of the electrically conductive surface into the tissue surface.

18. The electrosurgical instrument of claim 17, wherein the non-conductive surface is substantially planar.

19. The electrosurgical instrument of claim 17, wherein the non-conductive surface is substantially flush with the electrically conductive surface.

20. The electrosurgical instrument of claim 17, wherein the electrically conductive surface projects from the non-conductive surface.

21. The electrosurgical instrument of claim 17, wherein the electrically conductive surface is recessed in the non-conductive surface.

22. The electrosurgical instrument of claim 17, wherein the electrically conductive surface has a first surface area, the non-conductive surface has a second surface area, and the first surface area is smaller than the second surface area.

23. The electrosurgical instrument of claim 1, wherein the head comprises an electrode and the electrode includes the electrically conductive surface.

24. The electrosurgical instrument of claim 23, wherein the electrode has a T-shape.

25. The electrosurgical instrument of claim 23, wherein the electrode has an L-shape.

26. The electrosurgical instrument of claim 1, further comprising a return electrode, wherein the electrically conductive surface and the return electrode are configured to be coupled to opposite poles of an electrosurgical generator.

27. The electrosurgical instrument of claim 1, wherein the head comprises a first portion and a second portion.

28. The electrosurgical instrument of claim 27, wherein the first portion comprises a projection, and the second portion defines a hole that receives the projection.

29. The electrosurgical instrument of claim 28, wherein the projection is deformed to secure the projection in the hole.

30. The electrosurgical instrument of claim 27, wherein the first portion comprises a groove and the second portion comprises a ridge aligned with the groove.

31. The electrosurgical instrument of claim 1, wherein the head has a substantially parallelepiped shape.

32. The electrosurgical instrument of claim 1, further comprising a sheath coupled to the shaft and moveable to at least partially cover the flexible portion and the head.

33. A method of performing electrosurgery comprising:

positioning an electrically conductive surface of a head of an instrument adjacent to a tissue surface, the head being pivotable relative to a shaft of the instrument; and

moving the shaft relative to the tissue surface with the head pivoting such that the electrically conductive surface is oriented substantially parallel to the tissue surface.

34. The method of claim 33, further comprising biasing the electrically conductive surface towards the tissue surface using a flexible portion of the instrument.

35. An electrosurgical instrument comprising:

a shaft; and

a head coupled to the shaft, the head including an electrically conductive surface, the head being pivotable relative to the shaft such that the electrically conductive surface is oriented substantially parallel to the tissue surface as the head moves across the tissue surface.

36. An electrosurgical instrument comprising:

a shaft; and

a head coupled to the shaft, the head being pivotable relative to the shaft, and the head including an electrically conductive surface, for treating tissue, positioned at only one side of the head.

37. An electrosurgical instrument comprising:

a shaft; and

a head coupled to the shaft, the head including an electrically conductive surface,

wherein the head is configured to pivot relative to the shaft and to slide across a tissue surface as the electrically conductive surface is moved across the tissue surface.

38. A method of performing electrosurgery comprising:

positioning an electrically conductive surface of a head of an instrument adjacent to a tissue surface, the head being pivotably coupled to a shaft; and

sliding the head across the tissue surface, wherein the head pivots relative to the shaft to facilitate the sliding.

39. A method of treating chondromalacia comprising:

positioning an electrically conductive surface of a head of an instrument adjacent to a cartilage surface, the head being pivotable relative to a shaft of the instrument;

moving the shaft relative to the cartilage surface, whereby the head pivots relative to the cartilage surface; and

applying electrical energy to the electrically conductive surface to treat chondromalacia.

40. An electrosurgical instrument comprising:

a shaft;

a resiliently flexible portion; and

a head coupled to the shaft through the resiliently flexible portion, the head being pivotably coupled to the resiliently flexible portion, the head including a substantially planar tissue contact surface including an electrically conductive portion.

41. The electrosurgical instrument of claim 40, wherein the shaft defines a longitudinal axis and the head is offset from the axis.

42. The electrosurgical instrument of claim 40, wherein the resiliently flexible portion comprises a distal portion of the shaft.

43. The electrosurgical instrument of claim 40, wherein the substantially planar contact surface includes a non-conductive portion.

44. The electrosurgical instrument of claim 43, wherein the non-conductive portion has a larger surface area than the electrically conductive portion.

45. The electrosurgical instrument of claim 40, further comprising an electrical lead coupled to the electrically conductive portion.

46. An electrosurgical instrument comprising:

conducting means for applying energy to a tissue surface;

flexing means coupled to the conducting means for biasing the conducting means towards the tissue surface; and

pivoting means for pivoting the conducting means relative to the flexing means.